

Engaging with spelling in Scots language

Lesson 1

An Introduction to the Middle Ages

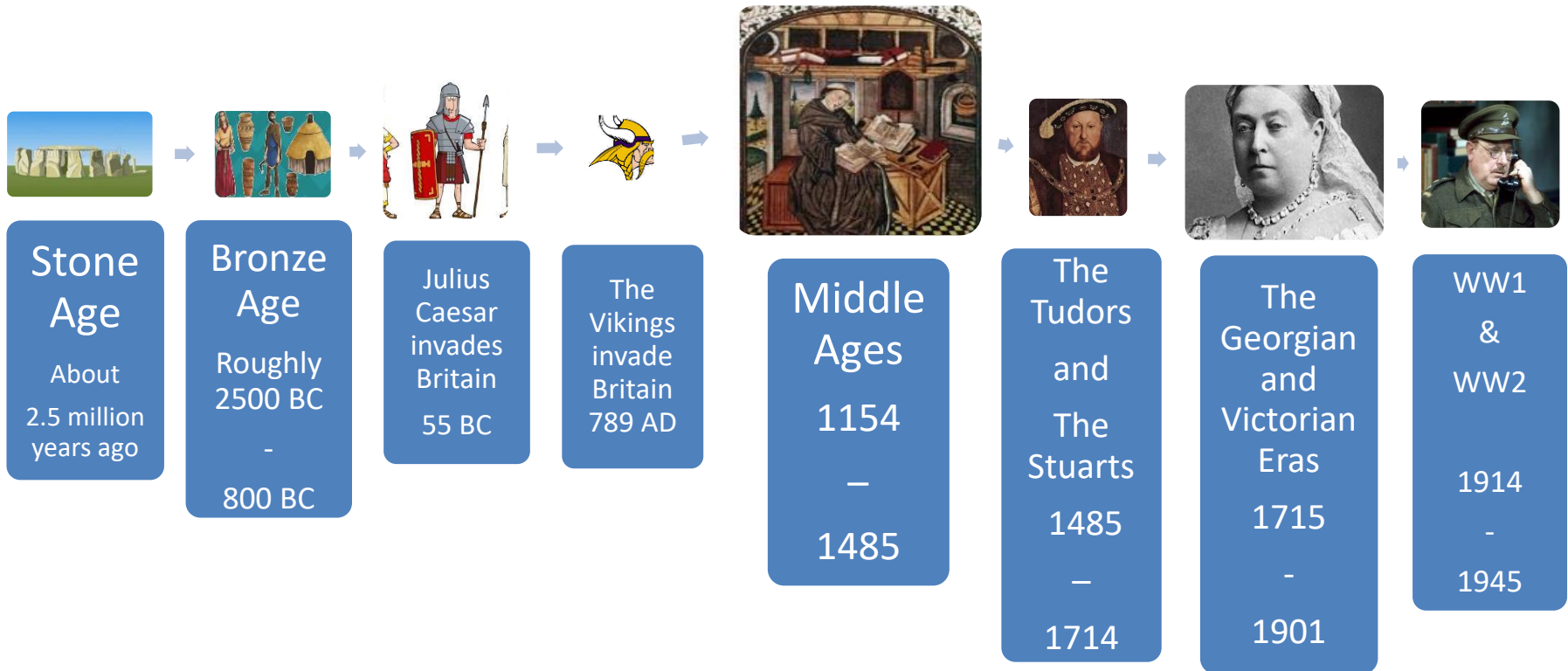


When were the Middle Ages?

- The Middle Ages (or Medieval period) is the period between the Roman Empire (often said to have ended in AD476) and the Renaissance (often dated from 1453).
- The Dark Ages are the first part of this period, following the collapse of the Roman Empire (476-1066). The High Middle Ages are the second part of this period (1066-1453).

Timeline of Great Britain

- As a class, discuss this timeline
 - In particular, consider who was the ruling power at each point on the timeline and what their values were
 - Discuss how each era shaped the culture of Great Britain



Feudal System

The 'feudal system' is the name for a power structure where people held their land in return for promising loyalty, known as “doing homage”, and providing services such as working or fighting for their lord.



Feudal System

- In the 20th century, historians described medieval government in terms of a set of ranks:
 - king
 - barons
 - knights
 - peasants
- Historians imagined the feudal system as an agreement between the different ranks:
 - the king ruled and protected the country
 - the barons supplied knights when there was a war
 - the peasants did all the work



Day to Day Life

- During the medieval period, most people in Britain lived in the countryside and spent their lives farming in the fields and raising animals. People lived in small communities known as “touns” with roughly ten families per toun.



- Some people lived in larger settlements known as “burghs”. People from the countryside would go to these burghs to buy and sell goods.

Task 1 - Note Taking

- Watch these two YouTube Videos. Take notes as you watch and learn about:
 - [Medieval towns](#)
 - [Medieval daily life](#)
- Details to take notes on are:
 - What people did for work
 - What sort of things they would like to buy at the market
 - What differences in lifestyle were there for the people who lived in the towns and the people who lived in the countryside



Task 2

With your shoulder partner discuss what you have learned so far. You may require the previous pictures and slides to help you



- Answer the following questions:
 1. Who is the richest person?
 2. Who are the poorest people?
 3. Which group provide food for the knights?
 4. Which group farm the land?
 5. Who does the King give land to?
 6. Which group are the most skilled at fighting?

What was reading & writing like in the Medieval times?



- Most people could not read or write
- The two were in fact very separate skills
- Writing was a highly skilled practice mostly taught to clerks
- Royalty, nobility and monks were some of the few able to read
- Materials for writing on were expensive and difficult to make
- People wrote on parchment, or treated animal skins
- They used quills to write which made writing a laborious process

Spelling

- During the Middle Ages there were fewer rules about spelling
- This was because people tended to read aloud rather than silently, so it was easier to notice and adapt to changes in spelling
- Also, accents played a part in the way words were spelled, as scribes would write the words the way they sounded when spoken



Examples of Medieval words which are spelled differently

- Using the examples below, make notes on which letters in which words would change

Word in English	Medieval Spelling 1	Spelling 2	Spelling 3
written	writin	vrittin	vrittyn
house	houss	hows	hus
strength	strenth	strinth	strynth
what	quhat	qwat	qwhat
which	quhilk	qwhilk	qwylk

Now that you have completed the Medieval section it is time to start focussing on Scots language



- A great place to start is with this History of Scots animation: [Education Scotland History of Scots](#)
- Then we recommend
 - [The History of Scots](#) told in English
 - [The History of Scots](#) told in Scots (same video as above but a great way to start hearing Scots)